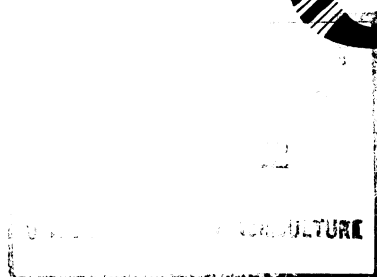


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Presses and Aprons



*for work
in
the home*

Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics
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Farmers' Bulletin No. 1963

DRESSES AND APRONS

for work in the home

by

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Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics

A well-designed, well-made house dress can give a real lift to homemaking jobs. A poorly designed dress or apron, on the other hand—one that restricts when you reach or bend, that twists or gets in your way as you stoop or climb—can be as fatiguing as a poorly planned kitchen.

On the following pages are dresses and aprons designed by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics. These designs illustrate styles and style features that make clothes function for housework. Also they are attractive, simple to make, and quickly and easily ironed.

Commercial patterns for most of these designs are available, thus making it possible for homemakers who sew to duplicate the dresses and aprons shown.

Each design scores in the following five ways:

Comfort.—Styling is such that garments permit free action and are cool.

Safety.—Pockets, belts, and sleeves won't catch on pan handles or get in the way to cause accidents while the wearer is cooking, cleaning house, or doing the family wash.

Convenience.—Dresses and aprons are easy to put on and take off. They present no laundry problems. And they are equipped with usable pockets placed so that hands can slide in without effort.

Durability.—If materials are chosen carefully and workmanship is good, garments made from these designs will wear well. They have no features that will cause them to tear or wear out in a short time.

Attractiveness.—Styles are planned so that the garments do not muss readily. Materials recommended will not show wrinkles or spots quickly; colors are lasting and fresh looking.

Check functional features

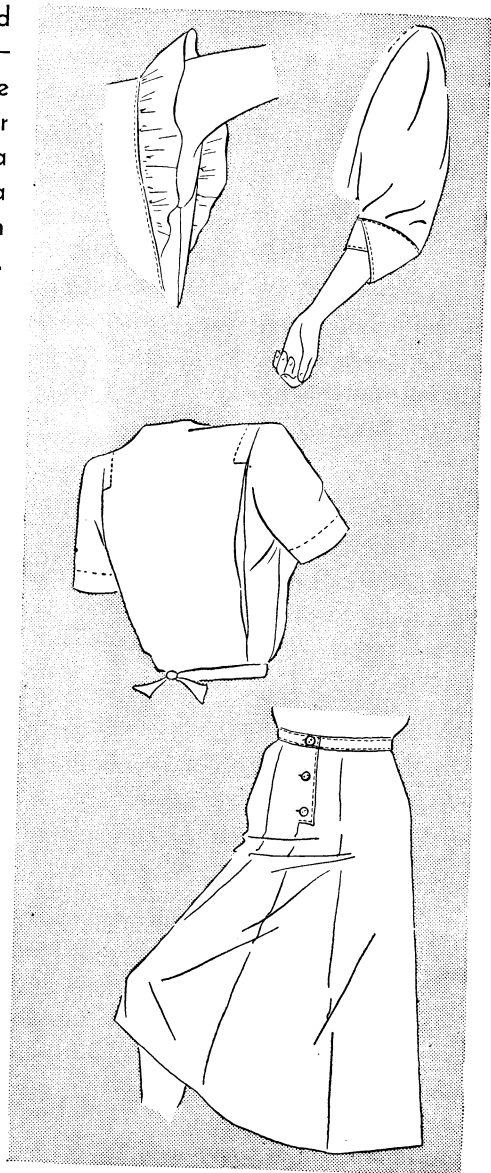
In detail here are points to check when you select a pattern for a dress or apron, or buy ready-mades. Remember that all parts of the garment must function together; otherwise the advantages of good design features are wasted. Well-cut sleeves, for example, cannot function properly if a dress back is tight. Sleeves and back have to move together to provide comfortable spread for long reaches.

Sleeves are more comfortable and safe if short—above the elbows—and moderately wide. For more freedom and comfort, use wings or ruffles instead of sleeves. For extra warmth on chilly mornings, wear a work jacket with three-quarter-length sleeves, tapered to fit the lower arm. Such sleeves won't catch on things.

Instead of shoulder pads—which are warm, slow drying, and a nuisance—use special style details that flatter your shoulders. If more shoulder shaping is needed, use light, washable, quick-drying stiffening.

Blouse backs may provide action by way of pleats, gathers, or similar features that set in extra width. This fullness needs to be placed near the sleeves so it will respond quickly to arm movements.

Skirts, moderately wide but not full, are safest for work around a house. A six-gore skirt is a good choice because it may be cut wide enough at the lower edge to allow for walking, running, climbing, and stooping, and yet fit the hips comfortably. Dirndls and other full skirts do not hold to the figure; so they fall over in the way or catch on shoe heels as you stoop.



Neck lines that are large enough to slip over the head without strain or fuss save dressing time and wear and tear on the garment. They are cool and, if the dress is put on carefully, they do not muss the hair.

Good finishes for neck lines are facings, flat collars, or flared ruffles, because these can't crowd up against the neck. If you use a collar or ruffle, have it in front only—just to the shoulder seams. A neck line that is plain in the back is much cooler than one with a back collar.

Waist bands that are fitted easy rather than tight help make dresses comfortable and allow the wearer to move without restraint when she must reach. A set-in belt keeps skirt and blouse fullness in place and is a safety feature because it is flat. Ties, set in at the side or side-front seams, allow you to adjust the waistline to your comfort. Ties should be narrow so they will make a flat bow. Wide fluffy bows catch on things in a kitchen.

Pockets are easier to use if placed where the garment is full, but not where it fits over a rounded part of the body. Size should always depend on the use you want to make of a pocket. In general, it should be large enough for your closed hand. Straight or slanted openings are equally handy on a pocket at the side. There your hand can drop straight down into it. A pocket nearer the front is easier to use if its opening slants toward the side.

Dress openings are most convenient when they are long enough to permit the dress to be put on or taken off easily without straining the material or the workmanship—and without mussing your hair.

Fastenings may be as few as will keep an opening closed and flat without gapping. Keep buttons within hand range so it's not necessary to bend over or to pull a dress up to button it. Flat, medium-size buttons with smooth edges are easy on buttonholes and no trouble when you iron. Be sure fastenings are washable in every way.

Materials best for housework are medium-weight cottons that can be worn without a slip in hot weather. All-over patterns on colored rather than white backgrounds look fresh longer. Whenever possible, buy goods thoroughly shrunk and dyed fast to washing, sun, and perspiration.

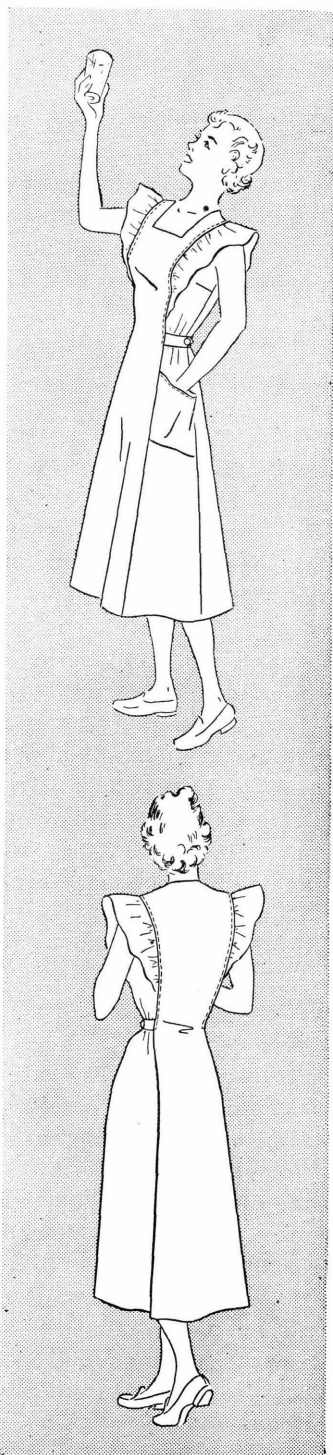
Trimings should be as sturdy as the material they trim. Otherwise they will wear out before the dress does. Use only preshrunk trim, so your dress won't be ruined when it is washed.

Workmanship should be neat and sturdy with reinforcements wherever there may be some strain—at pocket corners and under buttons. To last, buttonholes must be cut with the grain of the goods and closely worked. Construction, besides being strong, should be flat with no thick lumpy corners. Such corners spoil the looks of a garment, make ironing slow.



Pull-over dress

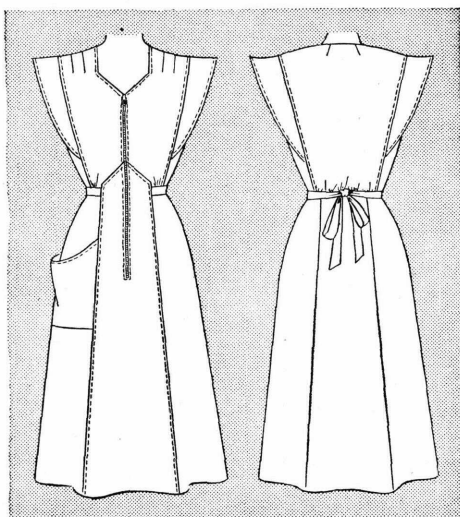
Simple to make, easy to wear, quick to iron—this dress is designed for the youthful figure. It is styled with comfortable fullness held in place by narrow straps set in at the seams at side front and side back and buttoned at side seams. Wings, double-layered so they won't wilt, take the place of sleeves and give perfect arm freedom. The collarless square neck line makes the dress cool and simplifies both sewing and ironing.



Zipper Dress

With a zip of the long—but not too long—zipper, this dress permits those hurried changes that busy housewives may have to make.

This dress is styled with easy fullness. Adjust it to suit yourself with narrow waist ties set in with the front panel. The bow in back is small, flat, and safely out of the way.



Square-neck Dress

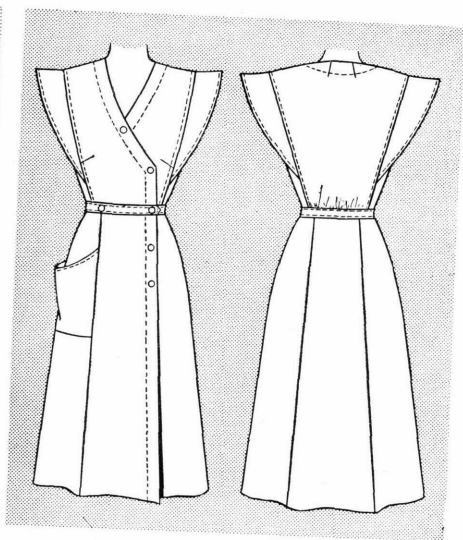
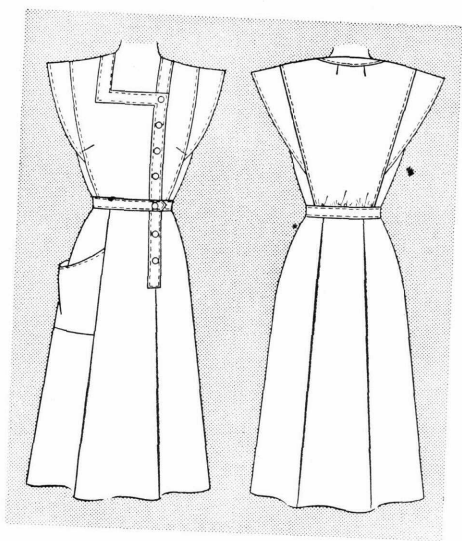
A neatly fitted dress with real working comfort. It has the six-gore skirt that many women like because it is flattering and wide enough for both comfort and safety. The blouse is cool and collarless.

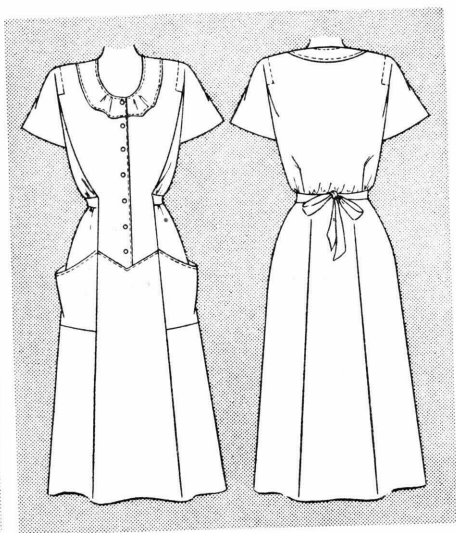
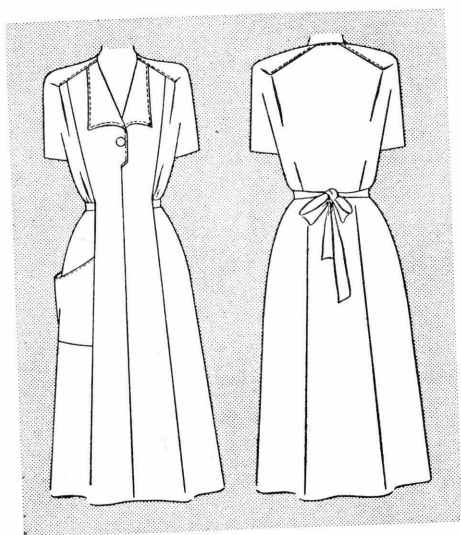
Wings take the place of ordinary sleeves. Set into side-front and back seams, they provide comfortably for the arm's thickness, they allow free arm movement, and they don't crush. The belt is stitched in.

Wrap-around Dress

For women who like wrap-arounds here is a style with fastenings placed so there's no groping to find them. Two buttons at the waist and two from the waist to the bend of the hips keep the skirt from blowing open too far, or from falling over into the way of your work. Thus you have the conveniences of a wrap-around—but none of its usual skirt hazards and annoyances. An extra convenience is the stitched-in belt.







Tailored Dress

Trim and simply designed, this princess dress (at far left) with its action back lets you reach with ease to the topmost shelf. Pleats set in at the side-back seams function with the sleeves, giving extra room as it's needed. The collar, cut in one with the dress, is at front only. The plain neck line in back is cool, doesn't muss under a wrap.

Circular-sleeve Dress

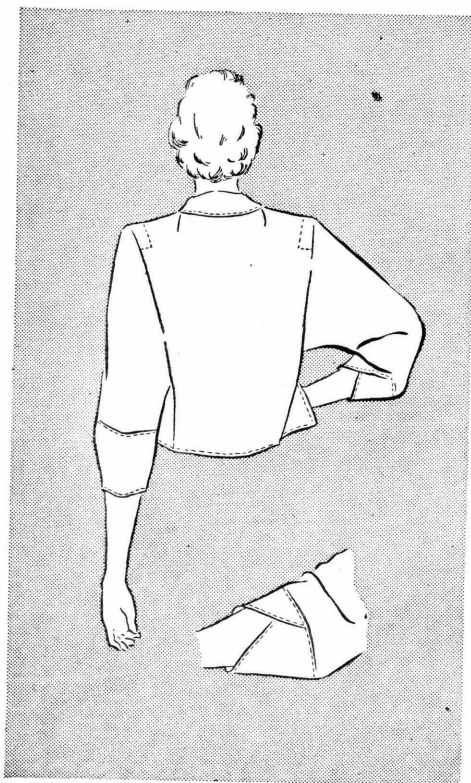
Designed for action, this dress at near left has pleats in back next to the sleeves so they give quickly for reaching. The skirt is wide enough but not too wide. Ties adjust the waist to your comfort. The flared sleeves are cool.

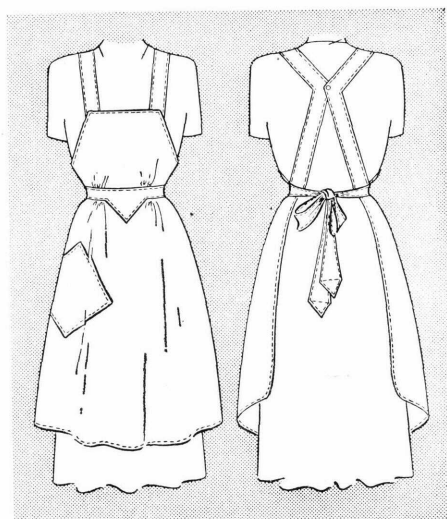
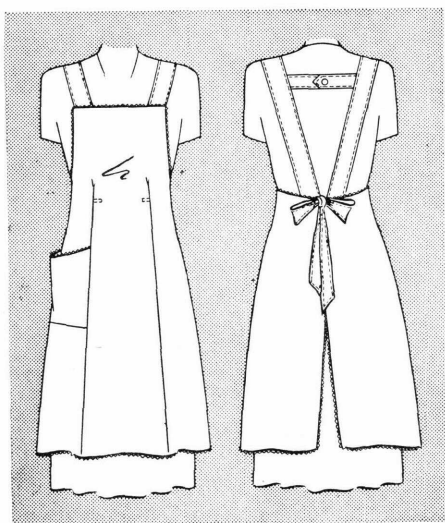
Other features: Flared neck ruffle that flatters but is not warm; front opening long enough for easy dressing and fastening; flat buttons, or snaps that can be put on with a hammer make practical fastenings.

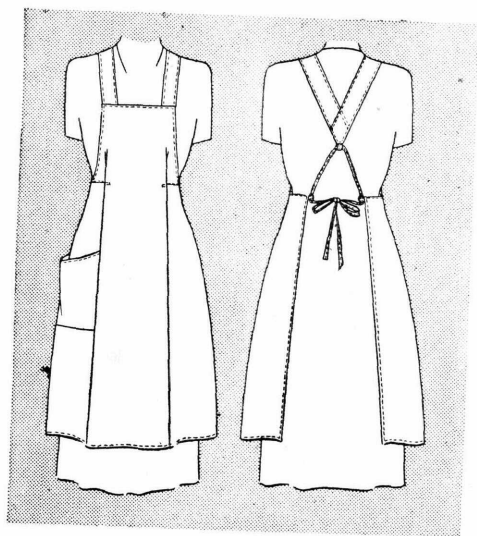
Kitchen Jacket

Safety features highlight this washable jacket, designed for wear before the house is warm, or when you have to work in a chilly attic or basement. The back of the jacket has action pleats next to the sleeves. Three-quarter-length sleeves stay up out of the way of dishwater, pan handles, and fire. Sleeves are cut with comfortable elbow room. Surplice cuffs spread as needed to fit lower arms.

Make the jacket of smooth-finished material. Napped goods are hazardous for work around a fire.







Square-bib Apron

This coverall apron is a three-way timesaver—simple to make, quick to put on, and easy to iron. Cut crosswise of the goods, its bib and skirt are in one piece.

Two long skirt darts shape the apron to the waist and provide fullness over the bust. The crosswise strap in back keeps the shoulder straps from slipping. It is also equipped with a snap so you may slip the apron on and off without pulling it over your head.

Bias Apron

Make this apron of plaid or checked goods. It takes one yard square, turned bias-wise to make the main part of the apron, another half yard for the belt, straps, ties, and pocket.

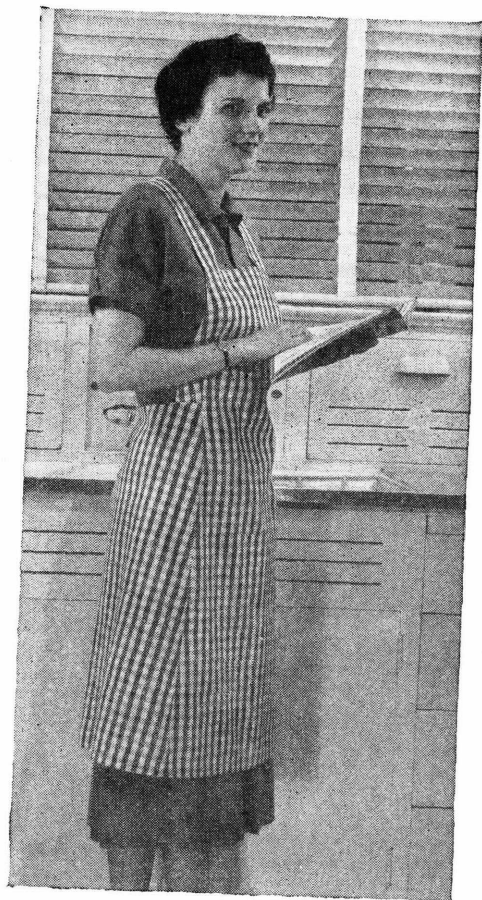
Shoulder straps are shaped and snapped in back so they stay up in place. If necessary to get the apron off in a jiffy—just give the snaps and the waist tie a sharp jerk.

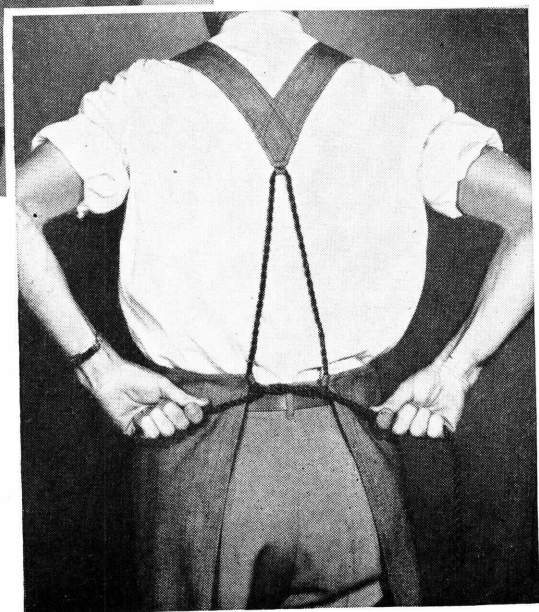
Adjustable Apron

One apron like this will fit all women in the household—guests, too. To adjust it, simply draw up or let out the cord in the back. Knots in both ends of the cord keep it from pulling out.

This apron is quick and easy to make and to iron, comfortable and convenient, and a timesaver on ironing day.

For a smooth fit, choose firm cotton, such as work cotton or denim. By careful cutting you can make this apron from 1 yard of 36-inch plain material.





Man's Apron

This apron is adjustable to a man of any size; it offers good protection for shop or jobs about a home. A woman might also like one of these aprons. Made of shower-resistant, washable cotton, it's ideal for wash-day or dirty or wet work.

Two long darts—one on each side—give the apron the shape that's needed. Shoulder straps are fitted and sewed at center back to keep them from sliding. One piece of cloth makes the three pockets, which may be partitioned as desired.

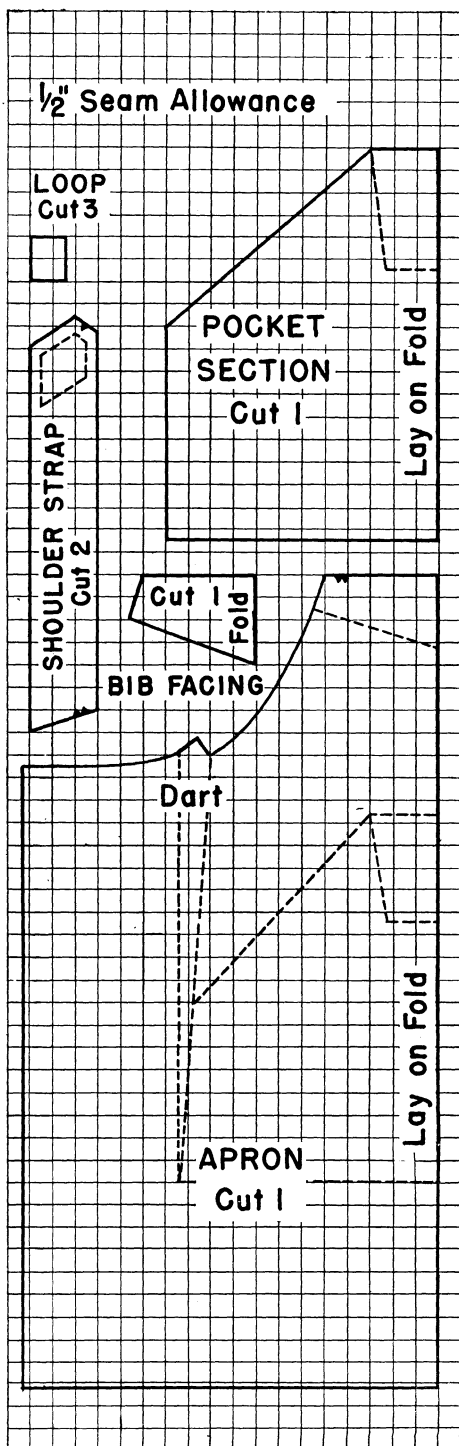
To make the pattern: Draw 1-inch squares both ways on wrapping paper or newspaper. If you use newspaper, draw lines with colored pencil. Count squares and block the pattern pieces on exactly as shown here.

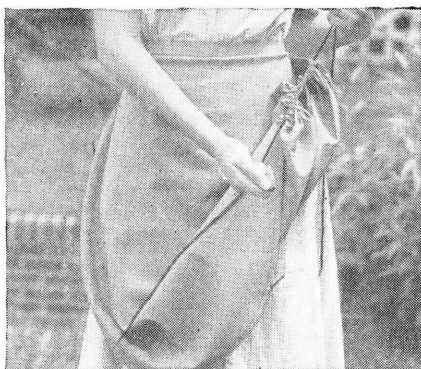
Cut the apron from $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards of preshrunk, colorfast goods.

To make the apron: Baste hems on sides of the shoulder straps. Lap straps at center back. Turn raw edges in. Insert a loop for the cord at lower point, then double stitch the edges.

Stitch darts in the apron. Face the bib, then hem apron edges in the same way as the straps. Insert a loop for the cord at each corner in the back. Hem three top edges of pocket piece. Turn under sides and lower edge. Sew to apron and stitch to form partitions.

Make a drawstring—about $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards long—longer if the man who wears it prefers aprons tied at front. For a tie, use cloth turned in and stitched or use cord. Run tie through three loops as pictured and knot each end to keep it from pulling out.





Basket Apron

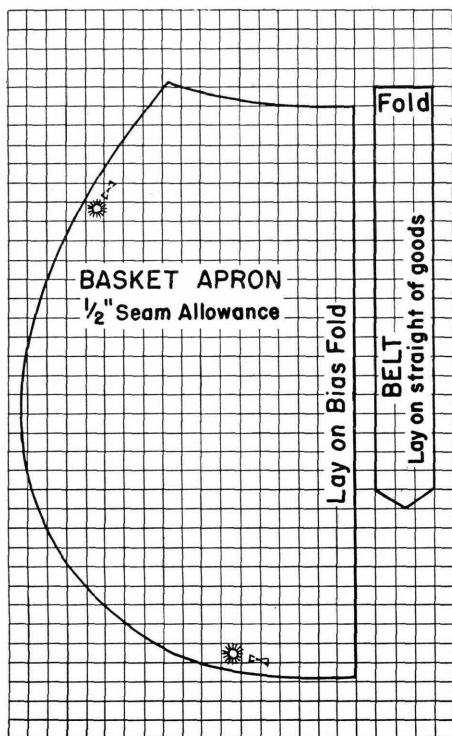
Designed for double duty, this simple tie-on apron, equipped with shoestrings in the edge casings, can be quickly transformed into a basket for carrying in such things as apples or kindling. It leaves both hands free.

Make this apron of sturdy cotton—1 yard is enough—and use strong, smooth cotton shoestrings in the edges. You'll need four 36-inch shoestrings.

Draw 1-inch squares on paper and draw the pattern on as shown. Work four eyelets—one at each of the four places indicated on the hem. Turn the hem and stitch it.

Thread two shoestrings through each side casing. For a good hand grip, let 2 or 3 inches of one string hang from top eyelet, 2 or 3 inches of the other string hang out the lower eyelet. Cut off the opposite end of each string and bar tack it just back of the eyelet.

Pull the strings, drop the ends inside, and you have the basket pictured here. The cotton shoestrings will not slip until you grasp the edges of the apron firmly back of the eyelets and pull.





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Kneeling Apron

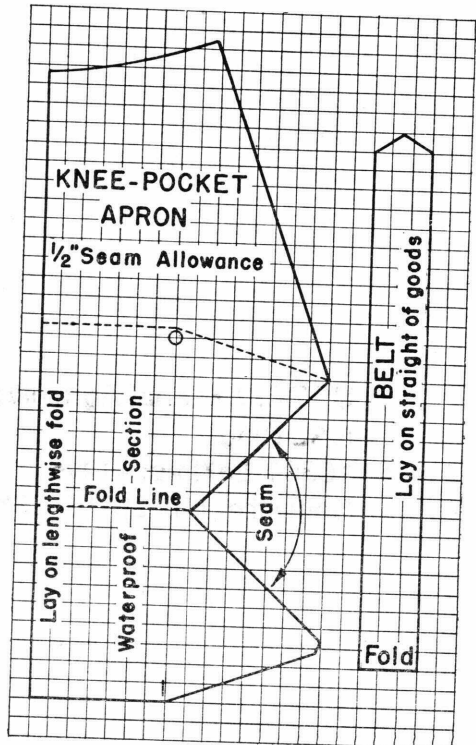
This special apron for the many kneeling jobs about a house serves first by providing a big pocket. Turn this pocket inside out and your clothes and knees are protected from soil, damage, or dampness. Make the apron entirely of plastic, or use sturdy, dark material for the apron proper and apply a plastic knee shield. A yard of goods, plus plastic, will make this apron.

To make a pattern: Draw 1-inch squares on paper. Count spaces on pattern shown at right, then draw on marked-off paper. Label and cut.

Cut out the apron and knee section. Seam (right sides together) sides of large V on each side of the apron. Seam (wrong sides together) sides of V on separate knee section. Turn under the plastic all along the top and stitch to apron.

Trim $\frac{1}{4}$ inch off the outside edges of the plastic. Finish sides of the apron with narrow hems turned to the right side. Make hems so that they cover the raw edges of the plastic.

Install two snaps as indicated. Sew on waistband. It also may be fastened with snaps.



The Bureau does not distribute patterns for these designs. Patterns for most of the garments have been made up commercially and are available directly from the pattern company or on special order from your local pattern counters. Pattern numbers for designs pictured, made by Advance Pattern Company, Inc., 1407 Broadway, N. Y. 18, N. Y., are below. (Price of pattern 4604 is 15 cents—all others, 25 cents.)

Design	Number	Design	Number
Pull-over dress	4602	Circular-sleeve dress	5018
Zipper dress	4600	Kitchen jacket	4674
Square-neck dress	4601	Square-bib apron	5021
Wrap-around dress	4603	Bias apron	5020
Tailored dress	5019	Adjustable apron	4604



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